

A Descriptive Study of the Head Start Health Component

Volume III: Qualitative Data

December 1995

Submitted to:

James A. Griffin, Ph.D.
Federal Project Officer

Submitted by:

Michael J. Keane, Dr.P.H.
Project Director
The CDM Group, Inc.

Robert W. O'Brien, Ph.D.
Study Director
The CDM Group, Inc.

David C. Connell, Ph.D.
Project Director
Abt Associates, Inc.

Nicole C. Close, M.S.
Data Analyst
The CDM Group, Inc.

Prepared for:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families

This study, entitled *A Descriptive Study of the Head Start Health Component*, was conducted under Contract # 105 93 1911 for:

Research, Demonstration, and Evaluation Branch
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Additional copies are available from:

Head Start Bureau
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013

Table of Contents

Chapter		Page
1.0	OVERVIEW	1-1
1.1	Purpose of Volume III	1-1
1.2	Organization of Volume III	1-2
2.0	HEAD START STAFF INTERVIEWS	2-1
2.1	Head Start Procedures	2-1
	List of Common Abbreviations Found in Staff Responses	2-3
	Center Director	2-5
	Health Coordinator	2-17
	Mental Health Coordinator	2-41
	Nutrition Coordinator	2-57
2.2	Reported Staff Responsibilities	2-61
	Center Director	2-62
	Health Coordinator	2-63
	Mental Health Coordinator	2-64
	Nutrition Coordinator	2-65
	Parent Involvement Coordinator	2-66
2.3	Reported Staff Training Activities	2-67
	Center Director	2-68
	Health Coordinator	2-70
	Nutrition Coordinator	2-72
3.0	PARENT INTERVIEWS	3-1
3.1	Head Start Related Behavior Changes in Parents and Children	3-1
3.2	Parent Reports of How Head Start has Assisted Parents in Obtaining Health Care	3-89

4.0	RESEARCH STAFF REPORTS	4-1
4.1	Site Visit Summaries	4-1
5.0	OPEN COMMENTS FROM HEAD START STAFF AND PARENTS	5-1
5.1	Staff Comments	5-1
	Center Director	5-2
	Health Coordinator	5-7
	Mental Health Coordinator	5-11
	Nutrition Coordinator	5-15
	Parent Involvement	5-19
5.2	Parents' Comments	5-22

1.0 Overview

1.1 Purpose of Volume III

Volume III of the Final Report for A Descriptive Study of the Head Start Health Component contains information that is too detailed for inclusion into Volumes I or II as well as open-ended responses from Head Start staff and parents that were transcribed following the completion of the data collection activities. Inclusion of these data in Volumes I and II would have resulted in an inefficient presentation that would have detracted from the major findings of the study.

This volume provides interested individuals with the opportunity to review data on activities such as staff responsibilities and training, which, although summarized in the earlier volumes, were too detailed to present in a comprehensive manner. This volume also allows readers a chance to read and review the comments of almost 1200 Head Start parents and over 200 Head Start staff members who work with the Health Component. Many studies allow respondents to make comments regarding the focus or object of the study, yet these comments are rarely made available to the individuals who review the study results. Often, these open-ended comments are as informative as the quantitative data that are subjected to statistical analyses, and the comments may reveal new perspectives and issues that could be addressed in future research studies. Respondent comments in this study were transcribed, and in some cases, subjected to content analyses, the results of which are presented in the earlier volumes. In Volume III, comments in response to open-ended questions are presented as the interviewers reported them, and without interpretation. Tape recorders were not used during the data collection, so the transcriptions are based only on the interviewers' notes. It is anticipated that the readers will approach the comments of Head Start staff and parents with different perspectives and intentions, and that they will apply their own interpretations to these data.

1.2 Organization of Volume III

The data are presented in the four chapters that follow. Chapter 2 includes job responsibilities and training data that are taken from the different Head Start staff interviews. The third chapter contains comments from Head Start parents on different benefits they and their children have received during their Head Start experience. Chapter 4 contains the results of summary interviews with the research associates who conducted the site visits. The final chapter includes the more general comments parents and staff made regarding Head Start.